

Week 1 Readings Reflection – October 18th, 2011

I quite liked the concepts proposed by the authors in all four articles. The profiles developed by Betts and Neihert were I felt the most appropriate for our own school as we do not have to contend with as many extraneous factors (socio-economic, cultural and so on) as most state schools do in our home countries. I think it would be possible to identify gifted and talented students within the matrix proposed by Betts and Neihert and for the most part be able to make provisions for them from this.

It is interesting that amongst us we have this debate as to what the difference is between being gifted and being talented. I really liked Gagne's difference between them ("one cannot be talented without first being gifted") and the fact that you have to work at your gifts to become talented. As Edison once said, "Genius is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration."

One thing that struck me though as I read all four readings was the part that luck/chance plays in one's identification as being gifted and talented or indeed as one being endowed with a genetic disposition to be gifted as mentioned by Gagne. Gagne specifically refers to chance as playing a part in one's identification and to luck/chance I also would add opportunity as sometimes the right opportunity presents itself and one's giftedness and talents can shine. This is also alluded to by Dorbis and Vasilevska in their reading and in their instance, great efforts were made to seek out gifted and talented students within the Aboriginal community when previously this effort was not expended.

Finally, I was intrigued when Gagne spoke about how manual dexterity could be modeled into the particular fields of a pianist, video game player etc. I subsequently saw an article which referred to the notion of 'talent transfer'. Is this a concept that is spoken about much? Are there any instances where this happens/can happen in a school context? And, like identifying gifted and talented students in a school, are we possibly doing students a disservice by not alerting them to other areas where their gifts and talents could be better utilised? As someone in one of the articles I read said: "There are a lot of heavily disguised, potentially elite athletes out there but they just don't know it."

Tom